

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 7, 2016

The Honorable Gina McCarthy
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington DC 20460

Dear Administrator McCarthy:

The Louisiana sugarcane industry is a significant economic driver for the State of Louisiana with sugarcane produced on 412,351 acres in 23 parishes, making sugarcane Louisiana's second largest agronomic crop. The direct value of sugarcane to the State of Louisiana is estimated at \$746 million dollars and provides millions more in indirect value to the State. Many of the parishes that produce sugarcane in Louisiana are among the poorest in the nation and residents in these parishes rely heavily on sugarcane for jobs as well as the tax base that provides services for the entire community.

In recent days, we have received notification from farmers and researchers that unprecedented populations of the West Indian Cane Fly have infested sugarcane fields in several parishes in Louisiana and the insect's population is multiplying rapidly. Louisiana State University (LSU) researchers and scientists have notified us that the West Indian Cane Fly poses a direct and immediate threat to the entire Louisiana sugarcane industry with an infestation capable of causing catastrophic crop failure with losses in excess of 40% of total crop yield. A crop loss of this magnitude will devastate sugarcane growers and will negatively impact employment and services for these residents in some of the poorest communities in America. Farmers and university researchers have advised our office that the entire Louisiana sugarcane crop is at risk and that immediate, emergency action is needed.

It is our understanding that the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry has filed an Emergency Exemption under Section 18 of FIFRA for an emergency label for Imidacloprid for sugarcane to attempt to minimize crop losses resulting from the West Indian Cane Fly. The researchers and consultants that have contacted our office are very concerned that the magnitude of this infestation may overwhelm the normal Agency response time of 50 days to approve a Section 18 request. Researchers point out that sugarcane grown in Louisiana is a vegetative crop that produces no flower which should alleviate pollinator concerns.

We urge you to consider the timely nature of the filing and significant crop and economic losses that may be avoided by quick and decisive action. Please keep our offices informed of the progress of this filing and any significant events leading to the Agency's determination.

Sincerely,

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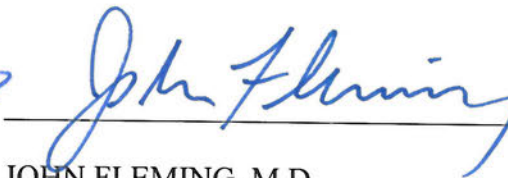
RALPH ABRAHAM, M.D.
Member of Congress

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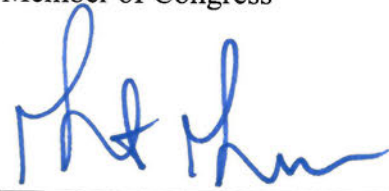
STEVE SCALISE
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink, 'C.W. Boustany, Jr.', written over a horizontal line.

CHARLES W. BOUSTANY, Jr., M.D.
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink, 'John Fleming', written over a horizontal line.

JOHN FLEMING, M.D.
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink, 'Garret Graves', written over a horizontal line.

GARRET GRAVES
Member of Congress